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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

INFORMATION

April 10, 1972

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE
EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

FROM: HENRY A. KISSINGER

SUBJECT: President Thieu's Views

In the attached cable, Ambassador Bunker has informed me that he and General Abrams will provide a detailed assessment of the situation by Wednesday morning. General Abrams plans to visit MR-1 and MR-2 tomorrow, and General Weyand will visit MR-4. In the interim, I thought you would be interested in Ambassador Bunker's report of his meeting with President Thieu this morning. During the meeting, President Thieu made the following significant points:

-- He is grateful for your strong support and assurances.

-- He believes the situation is now stabilized in MR-1 and preparations are being made to organize the counterattack. Vietnamese forces destroyed 47 tanks over the weekend, and the total is nearly 100.

-- The situation is quieter in MR-2 and there are indications that the 320 NVA Division has been ordered to withdraw to Cambodia to reorganize. (We have no confirmation of this.)

-- The reinforcements which have been moved up to support General Minh's forces in MR-3 give him adequate forces to clear Binh Long Province within three or four days. (Ambassador Bunker thinks this may be over-optimistic.)

-- The many enemy-initiated actions in MR-4 have been handled largely by territorial forces.

-- The enemy will probably be unable to sustain the offensive for much more than a month. They may try some offensive operations again by mid-July or August, but with less momentum than displayed in the present effort.

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-- He assumes you will want to continue troop withdrawals and states that the question of ground troops is not a matter of concern. The GVN will supply the needed manpower. It does however need additional aircraft and air support.

-- Steps are being taken to bring GVN forces up to full strength of 1.1 million men.

Ambassador Bunker reports that President Thieu continues to appear calm, confident, and determined. He believes he has the situation well in hand and that his forces are properly organized to meet enemy attacks. He anticipates mounting counterattacks against the enemy in MR-1 within a short period of time.